

MEMORIAL

OF

DR. DAVID GRIERSON,

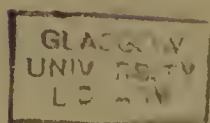
DEPUTY INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF HOSPITALS IN THE
INDIAN ARMY, ETC.,

WHO

DIED AT POONAH, JANUARY 6, 1863.

PRINTED FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION AMONGST DR. GRIERSON'S
RELATIONS AND FRIENDS.

BELL AND BAIN, PRINTERS, GLASGOW



FUNERAL OF DR. GRIERSON.

DR. GRIERSON died at Poonah, on the 6th January, 1863, and was buried next morning. The following description of the funeral appeared in the *Bombay Gazette* of January 9:—

“According to a Brigade Order, issued yesterday afternoon, H. M. 103d Regiment paraded on the road in front of Dr. Grierson’s house, and a great many of the officers in camp, and the private friends of the family, attended a little before six A.M. Exactly at six o’clock, the venerable missionary, the Rev. James Mitchell, read a short passage of Scripture and prayed inside the bungalow. There were very few present, except the family, at this exercise; as most of the gentlemen in attendance were not acquainted with the Scottish manner of conducting funerals, they remained outside till the body was removed from the house, amidst the tears of relatives, by a few soldiers appointed to that duty. As it was carried along the line of the troops they presented arms. At the end of the line it was placed on the sombre hearse. The troops were then moved to the front, and the procession properly formed. The cavalcade then moved on towards the burial-ground, in slow measured time, the band playing the Dead March. On reaching the Presbyterian Cemetery, the troops were drawn up on three sides of an extended square, with the grave on the remaining side. The Rev. James Mitchell then, standing near the centre, surrounded by the officers and general company, read several suitable passages of Scripture and offered up a prayer, in which he asked God to bless the dispensation to all present,

and especially to those more immediately concerned in the solemn event. The coffin was then lowered into its last resting-place, and the benediction was pronounced. A salute of three rounds was fired by the troops; and all being thus finished, the company broke up in solemn silence, and not without a solemn impression having been produced on all by the contemplation of our mortality. Dr. Grierson's grave is beside that of his little daughter, who died here some years ago, when he was stationed at Poonah.

"There is something very touching in the pomp and circumstance of a military funeral such as this, and especially when, as in this case, it is attended by such an expression of general respect."

TRIBUTE
 TO THE
 MEMORY OF DR. GRIERSON.

From the "Times of India," January 20, 1863.

DR. GRIERSON, whose death on the 6th of this month, as already noticed by us, was so deeply and universally regretted, was a native of Logan, in the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright. He was born in the year 1809. After receiving an excellent elementary education in the south of Scotland, he entered the literary classes of the University of Edinburgh, in which he was successful in carrying off several honourable prizes. When he first thought of a profession he was anxious to join the army; but having been disappointed in his expectation of obtaining a commission, he betook himself to what was more congenial to his quiet nature than the art of war—the study of medicine, under the celebrated professors of his Alma Mater. In due time he obtained with credit his degree of M.D. He arrived in India, as an assistant-surgeon, in 1832. His first appointment was to the Indian Navy, in which he remained for about three years, spending a good portion of this time in the Persian Gulf. It was probably his visits to the shores of Iran which awoke within him the desire, which he gratified some years afterwards, of studying the Persian language, in which, as well as in Hindustani, he passed the interpreter's examination, and in the flowery mysticism of the literature of which he was accustomed to find rather a fund of occasional jocular illustration than any solid lingual advantage. From first to last he was a student, as well as a man of business, not confining his reading to strictly professional

subjects, in which he ever took a warm, steady, and successful interest, but extending it to general science, and to general literature, especially that connected with contemplative and practical religion and philanthropy; and the elucidation and application of the common fount of Christian instruction, the Scriptures, which, as marked by all his friends, formed at once the authoritative and satisfactory guide of his beliefs and occupations. He became remarkable for his information and culture, though he was more sparing in dealing out his stores of knowledge, both in conversation and through the press, than their extent and value would have warranted. His advancement in the public service, till of late years, was scarcely correspondent with his merits. On principle, he declined to solicit promotion in any form, leaving his superiors to make demands upon him for employment, according to their own judgment; and he thus avoided the risk of coming in the way of others whom he supposed to be as deserving of consideration, according to their circumstances and abilities, as himself. For long he had only regimental duty, which he never underrated in any of its forms. For a short time he was in charge of the Lunatic Asylum in Colaba; and his observation and experience there he turned to good account in the preparation of able and judicious papers on the treatment of the insane, which we believe are now attracting attention in high quarters in this Presidency.

When in Bombay, Dr. Grierson took a warm interest in the formation of the Free Presbyterian congregation; and, on the choice of its communicants, he was ordained to its eldership, the duties of which he discharged, not in a formal and indifferent manner, but with much affection, judgment, and fidelity. From the clear and decided opinions which he held of the independence and autonomy (under its divine founder) of the Church of Christ in its own sphere, he was a great admirer of the principles and contendings of the distinguished parties in his native land, who constituted the Free Church of Scotland. But his convictions about the

spiritual liberties and responsibilities of the Church he in no degree allowed to interfere with his charity and catholicity. The habitual frame of his mind in regard to these matters was strikingly exhibited by himself in a very significant and suggestive address which he delivered at the formation of the Western Indian Organization of the Evangelical Alliance. After remarking that the "Alliance neither constitutes the Church nor a substitute for it," he proceeded to say, "The Alliance is a union suggested by the peculiar circumstances in Providence which mark both the various branches of the visible Catholic Church and her numerous enemies. And it is a union very generally viewed as desirable and lawful, to show that when variety of outward order and aspect exists, there is yet identity in many most important principles, and unity of heart. This is a fact which existed before the institution of the Alliance, and would exist without it, but the Alliance is perhaps the only means by which it could be made manifest to all, and especially to those who are ignorant of the true religion, or who are enemies of the Church. Divisions in the Church have made her comparatively weak for effecting good, and have rendered her the derision of her enemies. The Alliance, therefore, was thought necessary and projected to exhibit the reality of the unity which subsists notwithstanding of divisions, and to turn away rebuke from the people of God. We are here, then, raising a testimony to the important truth of the essential unity of the Church of Christ: and Poonah, the scene of this transaction, is henceforth the Gilgal of Western India, where the Lord, through means of His servants, has rolled away reproach from Israel. Nor should we fail to mark that the Joshua of our enterprise, our leader (Mr. Fenton), has been found in that great tribe which has been called (we need not inquire whether rightly or no) the chief bulwark of the Protestant cause."

Similar sentiments, it is worthy of notice, were expressed at the same time by Colonel Havelock, who, after declaring his adhesion to what he conceived to be a first principle, that

membership in a church should be founded "on a credible profession of effectual faith in the Redeemer," declared "his willingness to fraternize with every Christian who held by the head, and was serving the Redeemer in sincerity." This coincidence leads us to remark that there was a striking similarity in the Christian and general character of the afterwards famous General and the "beloved physician," in connection with whose lamented removal from this sublunary scene we are tracing these lines. Both were men of God, of a high and exemplary type. Both were strict adherents to what is intelligibly designated "evangelical truth." Both, while firmly holding their denominational principles, made a cordial recognition of the various and diversified members of the body of Christ. Both, while avoiding all merely irritating intrusion of religious address, took care both to speak and to act with fidelity, judgment, and courage when occasion required. Both, in an unusual degree, combined the *suaviter in modo* with the *fortiter in re*. Both were courteous and kind in all the circles in which they moved, and abundantly congenial with their friends and confidants. Both had literary taste and appreciation beyond the average of their Indian associates. Both were passionately devoted to their professional duties, in connection with which they were nearly equally late in finding their due place. Both were sincere philanthropists, and as opportunities offered, personal instructors. Both were held in high esteem by all who knew them. Of course we do not extend the comparison to the providential opportunities and development which conferred on the courageous, wise, able, and virtuous soldier, immortal renown.

We follow Dr. Grierson to the province of Sindh, to which, we believe, he proceeded in connection with an infantry regiment in 1850. At Kurrachee he devoted himself, as was his wont, with zeal and ingenuity, to more than his official duties, in which he excelled. He took a comprehensive view of the wants of the locality; and he did everything in his power, by personal advocacy and endeavour, to supply them. To the

improvement of the health of the troops and other residents in the locality he devoted much attention, finding a ready ear, a compassionate heart, a prompt and correct judgment, and a vigorous, though gentle, hand in the Commissioner of Sindh, who brought the resources of Government and of the town effectually to bear on the sanitary and other improvements which the doctor had suggested. It is to the credit of Mr. (now Sir Bartle) Frere that he understood, appreciated, and turned to the best account a man of Dr. Grierson's peculiarities and excellences, extending to him his cordial and warm regard; getting for him the appointment of staff-surgeon and medical storekeeper, of which he was so worthy; and heartily encouraging and assisting him in every undertaking to which he felt himself inclined. But the call of distress was equally potent and effective with Dr. Grierson as the encouragements, and even commands, of those in authority. He never failed, by night or by day, to visit either the poorest European or native in affliction, and to administer the relief which was in his power; and yet he never accepted a fee for his services in these circumstances, as we have been assured by a respected officer of the army, who has specially addressed us on this very subject. Education, missions, libraries, gardens, and museums, and whatever was likely to effect good, had much of his attention. He instituted a regular service on the Lord's Day for the Presbyterian soldiery and others of the same persuasion, too long left without a pastor; and, assisted by a benevolent friend from time to time, he publicly read a suitable discourse, and offered up praises, prayers, and supplications with the respectable meeting which he was thus instrumental in forming. He was a universal favourite among all who witnessed his benevolence and beneficence, and with many strangers who enjoyed his hospitality as they passed up and down the Indus.

It was about the close of 1861 that Dr. Grierson noticed the existence of the disease (aneurism of the aorta) which ultimately proved fatal in his case. The discovery, while it tended to solemnize his mind, neither disturbed his peace, nor

interrupted his career of usefulness. In the early months of 1862 he was removed to Bombay, where for a short time he was attached to the European General Hospital, and had the pleasure of meeting with some of his old and esteemed friends. He was soon afterwards nominated Deputy Inspector-General of Hospitals, and appointed to the Poonah division of the army. In this, the last office which he held, he devoted himself with great ability to the survey of the camp of Poonah, to the analysis and review of the various official documents which passed through his hands, and to the preparation of elaborate papers, full of valuable suggestions as to the best means of preserving the health and morals of the troops, which we doubt not will meet with respectful consideration from our present gifted and energetic Commander-in-Chief, Sir William Mansfield, and the congenial, philanthropic, and able Governor, Sir Bartle Frere, with whom and his Council the adoption of practical measures finally rests. These papers, and a few valuable contributions to the *Transactions of the Bombay Medical and Physical Society*, and one or two occasional articles in Indian periodicals (as an excellent Essay on Native Female Education in the *Oriental Christian Spectator*), are, we believe, the only remaining fruits of Dr. Grierson's pen.

During last warm season Dr. Grierson proceeded to Mahableshwar on the staff of the General. The scene of sublimity, wildness, and beauty there revealed was new to him, and it was viewed by him with a freshness, inquisitiveness, and intensity of interest more often witnessed in the days of youth than in those of mature age. On the heights he met with his old and warm-hearted friend, Sir Bartle Frere, whom he found, as he expected, "by no means spoiled by his Calcutta honours and his elevation to the Governorship of Bombay." "When I saw Sir Bartle this morning," he said with unusual satisfaction after meeting him, "I addressed him, as in duty bound, as Your Excellency, but his simple acknowledgment was, 'Pray, Grierson, don't call me *names*.'" His residence on the hills was attended with no improvement

of his health, though his faithful attention to his current work tended to conceal from others the progress of his malady.

About a month ago it became evident to all Dr. Grierson's friends, that the crisis of his disease was fast approaching. He himself realized the fact, and that without any interruption of his usual composure. "The Lord," he said to a highly valued Christian friend, who hastened to tender to him and his family his sympathy and aid, "has pulled me out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock." On another occasion (with the proverbial antithesis often noticed in his conversation) he said, "It is one thing to speak of religion, and another to act religion; I feel this to be the case in my present experience." During his last days and hours, his sufferings, from the writhings and convulsions and faintings of his ailments, appeared to the bystanders to be very great: but not a single murmur or complaint was heard from his lips. "I am concerned," he said to the friend to whom we have now alluded, "to die with decency, as it has been my endeavour to live with propriety." On the 6th of January, at Poonah, he fell asleep in Jesus, surrounded by the affectionate partner of his lot during almost the whole period of his eastern pilgrimage; his only son, a promising officer in the Royal Artillery; his two sons-in-law, also holding a good position in the army; and two of his daughters—altogether a group of family mourners such as is seldom seen in India. His body was interred next morning, with military honours, in the Presbyterian burying-ground, his old and esteemed friend, the Rev. James Mitchell, of the Free Church Mission, conducting the services. The news of his death has been received with sorrow at every station in India at which he was known. We attempt not his eulogy. There are some men of such excellent, pure, and pellucid character, that we have only to see them to love and trust them. Such was DAVID GRIERSON, whose gentle, peaceful, benignant, benevolent, and intelligent image will long rise before the admiring eye of his acquaintances, without an outline of it being presented either in ink or in colours.

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